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THE NEW YORK TIMES **METRO** WEDNESDAY, AUGUST

R E G I O N

Hiker From Brooklyn Is Found Dead in New Hampshire

By DANIEL J. WAKIN

It was supposed to be a 15-minute hike in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, about 10 miles from the synagogue that Abraham Hauer managed for the many Orthodox Jews who vacationed in the area.

Mr. Hauer's wife, Milka, stopped to rest after about five minutes, and her husband said he would be back in 20 minutes. But Mr. Hauer, who lives in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, never returned. After two days of searching by New Hampshire Fish and Game Department officers, the state police and hundreds of Orthodox Jewish volunteers, his body was found yesterday in the woods in Franconia.

The police said it appeared that Mr. Hauer, 53, who went on the walk toward dusk on Sunday, wandered off the path and was trying to find his way by thrashing through the woods. On Monday, searchers found his vest, about 200 yards from the body.

"Apparently he became disoriented and slipped and fell, and more than likely succumbed to the weather conditions," Sgt. Timothy Hayes of the New Hampshire State Police said. "There was no indication of major injury."

The medical examiner did not immediately give a cause of death, and the body was released to the family for a funeral in Brooklyn last night. Burial was to follow in Kiryas Joel in Rockland County, in keeping with Jewish custom that the deceased be buried within 24 hours.

Temperatures on Sunday night were down to the high 40's in the area, and it rained on Monday. "If you are not properly dressed or used to it, it can take a toll," Sergeant Hayes said.

Acquaintances described Mr. Hauer as someone who enjoyed good views and regular walks, but not as an experienced hiker. The sergeant said Mr. Hauer may have been trying to head for the sound of traffic, because three highways pass through the area. He was hiking in



Associated Press

A search for a synagogue manager near a vacation spot ends with bad news.

Franconia Notch, a narrow passage through rocky terrain, which could easily distort the sound of cars, making them seem closer than they were.

"It's a perfect echo chamber," Sergeant Hayes said.

The trail, which leads up the mountain to a ledge with panoramic views, is considered an easy hike.

Mr. Hauer managed the Arlington Synagogue in Bethlehem, N.H., an area popular with vacationing Orthodox Jews. He took over the synagogue about 10 years ago, and he prayed there three times a day, said Miriam Ausch, who lives in Williamsburg and was in Bethlehem

yesterday while on vacation.

She described Mr. Hauer as a kind man with a ready smile. "Everybody he met, he greeted," she said.

Mr. Hauer's disappearance drew hundreds of Orthodox Jews from New York, New Jersey and Montreal to take part in the search. Many others contributed money for boots, jackets and food for the searchers.

"They would do this for anybody from our society because our religion teaches us that," Ms. Ausch said. "Each person cares for the other. It's a big loss, but we accept God's will. We just have to go on."

In Williamsburg, Isaac Abraham said it was not uncommon for Orthodox Jews to organize searches when one of their own goes missing in the countryside.

"Usually when we go on searches we hope to bring someone out walking and talking," he said.

Along with his activities at the New Hampshire synagogue, Mr. Hauer was known as a matchmaker for the Satmars in Williamsburg,



The authorities were joined by Orthodox Jewish volunteers in the search for Abraham Hauer, above.

where he lived in a five-story brick walk-up.

In the Brooklyn neighborhood, others spoke well of Mr. Hauer, saying he was a popular and charitable man. "He would go out of his way to help everyone," said Eugene Singer, 51, a salesman. "He helped my brother once. He saw that he looked a little depressed because he was unemployed, and he got him a job making ties."

Acquaintances said Mr. Hauer had a 22-year-old daughter and several grandchildren.

The Associated Press quoted Milka Hauer, who explained how she sat on a rock waiting for her husband to return.

"I waited and went up farther and yelled and he didn't call," she said, "so I decided that he was in trouble."

Another woman, who said that she saw Mr. Hauer on Sunday before returning from vacation, said: "A nice man goes for a walk and doesn't come back. Of course it makes you upset."